



**The Brothers of the Christian Schools**  
**DISTRICT OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA**

444 A Route 35 South | Eatontown, NJ 07724

Tuesday, March 29, 2011

Dear Brothers and Partners,

Jerry, Dennis, and I have been here in Rome at the Intercapitular Assembly a bit more than a week now and I'm just getting around to a note! I'd apologize but they have been running our legs off since we arrived. The day begins with prayer at 7:15 am and ends with Mass followed by dinner at 7:30 pm.

In his welcome, Brother Alvaro recalled for us the importance of gatherings of the Brothers, going back to De La Salle and the first Brothers who assembled in Paris in 1694, to shore up the fledgling society in faith and to chart a way forward in hope. He also focused the purpose of our time here as the opportunity "to have a view of the Institute in its totality and to give renewed impetus to putting the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter's lines of action in place over the course of the next three years." In a curious turn of phrase, the Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor, Father José Rodríguez Carballo, who gave us a Roman version of a key note presentation, challenged us to be men of hope "with our eyes on the future where the Spirit is *pushing* us."

The agenda of the first three days was dense with presentations given by the Visitors on their progress in implementing the various Lines of Action of the 44<sup>th</sup> General Chapter. No one needed to be reminded that we were well into the penitential season! Fortunately, there were also complementary small group sessions in language groups with rich and open exchanges that were both invigorating and constructive.

Two days were spent on the Rule revision. Please recall that this revision was called for by the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Chapter to take into account, key Church and Institute documents since the Rule of 1987, and emerging matters, such as the reality of shared mission, and the new and evolving forms of association. The first day was a review of the latest draft of Chapters 1-5, which was quite lively in the language groups, and where in the plenary sessions, there was the opportunity to get a sense of convergence and difference across the Institute.

The second day of the Rule review dealt with Chapter 6 on Formation and Chapters 7-9 on Government. It was a bit more challenging as there were no draft documents, and was more of a sounding on observations and questions posed by the Rule Commission. An abundance of feedback was received by the Commission which will continue its work until handing over a final draft to Brother Alvaro and the General Council in September 2012. "All things considered," as Brother Ernest would say, we seem to be moving in a positive and healthy direction.

The other two days were taken up with Secretariat and Finance Reports. The highlight of these reports was learning of some very innovative works on behalf of the poor being done across the Institute by the Secretariat for Solidarity and Development in tandem with the work of SECOLI, and the work of the Secretariat for Lasallian Family and Association. Steve Tuohy and Charlie Kitson were bright spots and "done us" proud!

Other highlights include:

- Meeting with Br. Esayas regarding our on-going relationship with Lwanga and DENA
- Meeting with Brs. Lucio and Adalberto regarding potential collaboration with Antilles-Mexico South (Homestead, Florida, Haiti)
- Clear presentation by Br. Gustavo (Mexico North) on the International Assembly in 2013
- Upbeat presentation by Joseph Gilson on the Young Lasallian movement and activities
- Trying to get all of the Visitors lined up in the outline of a Star for a photo for the Young Lasallians "Many Stars, One La Salle" project
- An outing to Siena to build community and to explore a beautiful medieval city
- Most entertaining power point presentation: Charlie Kitson
- Best *Swahili Doo-op Group*: Dennis Lee and friends
- Best dinner entertainment: Louis DeThomasis' magic tricks!

Highlights of the days ahead are:

- Meeting with Francophone Canada to expedite our becoming one new Region of USA-Canada
- Priorities for the next three years
- Evaluation of the current General Council model
- Suggestions for the 45<sup>th</sup> General Chapter
- Any opportunity to get off the compound for gelato

Apart from all of the formal meetings, the real privilege of these days is being with so many good men who live generously the call to be Brothers. The fraternal spirit is rich and the sense of belonging to a global faith community that is renewing itself and making a difference for young people continues to inspire.

Best wishes from Jerry, Dennis, and me for many experiences of new life this spring!



Dennis Malloy, FSC

Visitor